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




STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INSURANCE  
DIVISION OF FIRE PREVENTION  
TENNESSEE FIRE SERVICE AND CODES ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY  
2161 UNIONVILLE- DEASON ROAD  
BELL BUCKLE, TENNESSEE 37020  
TELEPHONE: (931) 294-4111



PAULA A. FLOWERS  
COMMISSIONER

## THE IMPORTANCE OF USING A HOME ESCAPE PLAN

A home escape plan is a plan of action to safely exit a home in case of a fire. Each member of the household must know how to act and where to go in a fire so that precious seconds are not lost trying to decide what to do. Fire can and does grow quickly.

-  Draw a floor plan of your home including all windows and doors.
-  Locate two escape routes from each room. The first way out would be the door and the second way out would probably be a window.
-  Make sure escape windows can be opened easily. In a two-story building, plan your escape through a window onto an adjacent roof or porch. If you have no alternative and you must use an escape ladder, be sure everyone knows how to use it.
-  Choose a meeting place outside the home and mark it on the floor plan. A good meeting place would be a tree, telephone pole or a neighbor's home.
-  Review the plan and make sure everyone understands the planned escape routes.
-  Install smoke detectors on each level of the home and test them weekly.
-  Practice your escape drill twice a year. Vary the drill by calling out different hazards and pretend a route is blocked by smoke. This is a good test to see that household members know how to use an alternate route.
-  Once everyone is out of the home, STAY OUT! After reporting to the meeting place, designate a family member who will call the fire department from a neighbor's home.
-  If your family sleeps with bedroom doors closed, make sure the smoke detector can be heard.
-  If you are escaping through a door, feel the door, the door knob, and the space between the door and the frame with the back of your hand. If it is hot, do not open the door – use your second way out. If the door is cool, open it carefully. Brace your shoulder against the door and open it slowly. If the hall is clear of smoke and fire, proceed carefully. If you must exit through smoke, crawl low under it.
-  If you live in an apartment, never use an elevator in case of a fire. The elevator could take you to the floor where the fire is burning. If fire blocks your exit, close your apartment door and cover all cracks where smoke could enter with a sheet, towel or clothing. If possible, telephone the fire department, even if fire fighters are already on the scene, and tell them where you are trapped. In addition, wave a sheet or towel from the window to help fire fighters find you.
-  If you live in a manufactured home, follow the same procedures that apply to single-family homes. Keep all exits clear and install smoke detectors on interior walls.